

III. REMARKS

1. Applicant appreciates the allowance of claims 13-17.

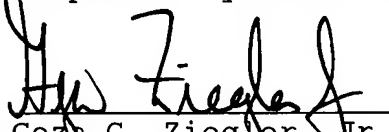
2. Claims 1-12 are not unpatentable over Stoddard et al. ("Stoddard") (U.S. Patent No. 6,207,937) under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

Stoddard is commonly owned by Brooks Automation, Inc., the assignee of the instant application. (See Reel/Frame 011855/0282, recorded 06/04/2001. Thus, pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(c), Stoddard is not prior art for purposes of 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are clearly novel and patentable over the prior art of record, and are in proper form for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issues remain, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment for any fees associated with this communication or credit any over payment to Deposit Account No. 16-1350.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date

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